

**Weekly Status & Information Report:  
Week of August 20 - August 23, 2007**

1. **Reminder - City Offices Closed Tomorrow:** On Friday, August 24, the City building will be closed for business beginning at 10:30am, except for the Police Department. City staff members will be enjoying their annual Employee Appreciation Day. City business will resume on Monday, August 27. *(Executive Assistant)*

2. **Crime Down:** Chief Ricucci announced that for the first six months of the year, overall crime in the City of Takoma Park has declined 9.15%. There were significant decreases in robbery (-31%), burglary (-17.1%), larceny (-5%) and auto theft (-7%). In reviewing the statistics, it was noteworthy that residential burglaries were down 23.9% from last year. People feeling safe in their homes is a top priority. The reduction in robberies is very significant.

Chief Ricucci was pleased with the results, but cautioned the residents of Takoma Park to remain committed to being security conscious and reporting all crimes and suspicious activity to the police. Chief Ricucci attributed the decreases to the extensive effort put forth by the entire department on the robbery detail during the first three months of the year. The establishment of the plainclothes unit has led to a covert presence on the streets. This unit has already successfully made many significant arrests for robberies and burglaries. The most important part has been the Uniform Patrol Division partnering with the Criminal Investigations Division to be visible on patrol, while in vehicles, as well as on foot in the target areas of the community. Bike patrol was also reinstated, which will play a significant part in crime reduction efforts in the future. *(Police)*

3. **The Chief in Meetings:** On August 21, Chief Ricucci spoke at the annual in-house training for the Crossing Guards. On August 23, he met with Andy Keleman, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, to discuss public safety issues. *(Police)*

4. **New Police Program:** Chief Ricucci announced a new program where police officers will be leaving business cards with a message from the Chief at all businesses in the City of Takoma Park. The card lets the business owner know that their business was checked the prior night by a named officer and was safe and secure. It also reminds merchants to have an updated emergency notification list at the police station. This is a part of Takoma Park's community policing outreach efforts to partner with the business community to let business owners know their businesses are being checked at night. *(Police)*

5. **Traffic Enforcement:** Officers conducted at least 48 traffic stops this week which resulted in citations, one Controlled Dangerous Substance (CDS) arrest, one vehicle impound and one recovered stolen gun from an accident. *(Police)*

6. **CSAFE:** CSAFE will be having a community meeting at Hillwood Manor on Thursday, August 23, 2007. Officers will be on-site to address concerns the community may have, and they will also be discussing the community yard sale scheduled for September. Mary Kendall, Director of CSAFE, attended the annual Weed and Seed National Conference in Detroit. *(Police)*

7. **Teen Forum:** The Recreation Department staff participated in a Teen Forum at the TP Recreation Center on New Hampshire Avenue. TP invited program specialists from

Arlington County and Prince George's County to present their strategies for successful teen programs in their communities. The staff brain stormed and mapped out a vision and plan for the next year in Takoma Park. The goal is to dramatically increase the level of participation and the quality of programs for our youth. *(Recreation)*

**8. Field Maintenance:** The Brickman Group initiated intensive field improvement measures at the Lee Jordan Field this week. Fifty cubic yards of topsoil was added to fill in low spots on the field. The entire area was aerated, seeded and is being irrigated every night. The Ed Wilhelm Field was also seeded and aerated and is receiving irrigation nightly. The drought has created a challenge to the grass growing initiative but improvement is expected throughout the fall. *(Recreation)*

**9. Recreation Department at the Middle School:** Assistant Recreation Director Gregory Clark and Teen Coordinator Karla Kelley met with Takoma Park Middle School Assistant Principal Susan K. Murray, and Montgomery County Recreation Specialist Emily McDonell to discuss future partnerships and marketing opportunities among the three agencies. With this partnership, a concerted, strategic effort can be made to direct young people into positive, community-based activities that guide their growth into productive and healthy adults. We are looking forward to a substantial and rewarding relationship between the Board of Education, County and our City. *(Recreation)*

**10. New Hampshire Avenue Corridor Design Charrette (Wards 2 and 3):** The City held three community workshops; one presentation; stakeholder meetings with agencies, businesses, community organizations and an open studio over the past week to develop a design concept for the New Hampshire Avenue Corridor, Ethan Allen Gateway and Maryland Gateway between Sligo Creek Parkway and Eastern Avenue. Work from the design process is available online, including meeting notes, designs generated, and within the next week, Monday night's powerpoint presentation and webcast of the presentation and question and answer session. The final document is expected to be available in October - November. The website is [www.takomaparkmd.gov/gateway](http://www.takomaparkmd.gov/gateway). For further information on the project, please contact Ilona Blanchard at 301- 891-7205. *(Housing and Community Development)*

**11. Neighborhood Traffic Calming Studies (Wards 2, 3, and 6):** The neighborhood traffic calming studies for Long Branch - Sligo, New Hampshire Gardens and Pinecrest have been completed. Each study will be posted on the internet as well as mailed to residents in these neighborhoods. For further information please contact Ilona Blanchard at 301-891-7205. *(Housing and Community Development)*

**12. Tenant Committee To Tackle Condo Conversion Legislation (City-wide):** The newly formed Tenant Committee on Legislative Issues has decided to obtain tenant support in recommending to city, county and state legislators that the Maryland Condominium Act needs to be changed. The recommended change in the law would give tenants a vote in whether or not a rental facility is converted to a condominium. Currently tenants do not have a say when a property is being converted and the result is often that a majority of the tenants are displaced from affordable rental units. Any tenant interested in participating in this new campaign can contact Linda Walker at 301-891-7222. *(Housing and Community Development)*

**13. Maple Avenue Streetscape:** Public Works will be planting trees in the area of Maple Avenue, from Philadelphia to Sherman. *(Public Works)*

14. **Invasive Management:** The City Arborist had bamboo at circle woods treated with herbicide as part of an ongoing effort to remove invasive plants from City property.  
(*Public Works*)